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EDWARD COLE, INDIAN COMMISSIONER IN THE ILLINOIS COUNTRY.

By Clarence Walworth Alvord.

The manuscripts of Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Northern Department, now preserved in the New York State Library, form a mine of historical information concerning the West, which has been almost unworked. The following letters from Edward Cole and others concerning Indian affairs in the Illinois country are fair specimens of the richness that has been so long hidden. Within the past year there has been published a "Calendar" of these documents so that it will be no longer difficult for students to make use of them.¹

After the treaty of peace of 1763, one of the most difficult problems confronting the British ministry was the management of Indian affairs. For the first time the imperial officials were brought into contact with the tribes of the far west and Canada; and the outbreak of the Indian war known as the "Conspiracy of Pontiac" taught them the danger of mistakes in handling this delicate situation. The ministry planned an elaborate organization in the spring of 1764 by which the whole territory outside the settled portions of the colonies was to be placed under the government of two superintendents assisted by deputies. The cost of this organization would

¹Calendar of the Sir William Johnson Manuscripts in the New York State Library, N. Y. State, Educ. Dept., Albany, 1909.

have proved so great that it was never legally put in operation on account of the failure to secure an act of Parliament to tax the Indian commerce. The superintendents were instructed, however, to put in operation such portions of the plan as could be done without too great an expense.

The Illinois country was within the Ohio district of the Northern Department. Sir William Johnson was superintendent; and George Croghan was his deputy agent for the district, and established his headquarters at Fort Pitt. Shortly after the occupation of Fort de Chartres, Sir William appointed Edward Cole commissary for the Illinois sub-district. The first paper published in the following pages is the form of instructions issued to commissaries, and from its perusal the reader will understand the powers granted to Cole at this time. Since the Indian department was a part of the military organization, Cole was obliged to act in conjunction with the military commandant at Fort de Chartres.

The cost of maintaining the Indian department and the hopelessness of taxing the colonies for that purpose caused the British ministry, in 1768, to throw the responsibility for the regulation of the Indian trade upon the colonies. Edward Cole, whose expenses had been particularly heavy, was thereupon recalled and the correspondence, here published, ends with his letters written on the homeward journey.

Form of Instructions to the Commissaries of Indian Affairs, Johnson Hall, March 24, 1767.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 25, p. 84. Draft]
Instructions for [blank] Commissary of Indian Affairs
at [blank].

You are immediately to proceed to [blank] where you are to reside as Commissary, And on your Arrival you are to Acquaint the Indians of your being appointed to inspect into the Trade, prevent abuses therein, and trans-

act all business [sic] with them under my direction-- That an Interpreter and Smith are also appointed to act for them Gratis in the respective capacitys, under your direction.

You are to shew your Warrt. & communicate your Instructions to the Commanding Officer, applying to him for Quarters in the most convenient place for the reception of the Indians, & for Yourself, the Interpreter, and Smith with provisions and fire-wood.

The inspection of Trade, correcting abuses, redressing Grievances, gaining intelligence of all ill designs, & securing the friendship of the Indians, being the Principal Objects of your Appointment, you will dilligently apply yourself to discharge these important Trusts, to which end you are imediately to inform yourself of the manner in which Trade has been hitherto carried on, and the most reasonable prices of Goods, and Peltry, The Strength, Connections and Interests of the several Tribes about you with their Sachems, Warriors &c all which you are to Report without delay to Guy Johnson Esqr. Deputy Agent for the middle District. And you are to make regular entrys of all Occurrences and Transactions a fair copy of which on *Folio* you are to transmit to my said Deputy every Three Months, or Oftener if the Service require it. You are also to keep an Exact Accot of the Quantity, and Value of Goods, and the like of Peltry traded off at your post as well as such as pass to other Garrisons, transmitting the same annually to my said Deputy and for yr. farther Governmt. with regard to trade &c you are now furnished, with a Copy of Regulations to which you are to see that due Obedience is paid.

Your are not to incurr any expense without orders from Me, or my Deputy beyond what is absolutely necessary for Pipes, Tobacco, or a Dram occasionally to the Inds., and you are to satisfy any Indians who may be troublesome on that head by Explaining to them the Expense the Govt. is at by these Appointments, and shew-

NB. *Michilimackinac*. every 6. Months. *Detroit* evy. 4 Do. *Niagara*. and *Ontario*. every 3 Months.

ing them the Nature of Your Office and that whatever Presents may be occasionally bestowed on those Nations who best deserve it, will be done by the Superintendant, or His Deputy. That it is Expected they will Shew their Gratitude for the Appointments already made That they will abide firmly by their Engagements and Live in peace and friendship with all his Majestys Subjects, as the only means they have to Intitle themselves to a continuance of this Establishment, or to the hopes of farther favors.

The Interpreter, and Smith are to be subject to your Orders to apply themselves diligently to their dutys, without accepting of any Gratification from the Indians, or being concerned in any Trade or business [sic] on pain of imediate Removal, And you are to inspect Strictly into their conduct in their Respective Capacitys, The better to enable you to do which, You will apply yourself to study the Language of the Neighboring Indians.

You are to keep Regular and Just Accots. of all Expenses you are Authorized to incurr Transmitting the same with proper Vouchers from the Comdg. Officer together with the Amt. of Your Sally. and that of the Interpreter and Smith to the sd Deputy presiding over the District, half yearly, that is to say to the 24th of March and September in each year, and these are to be sent in sufficient time to be included in my Genl. Accots. transmitted immediately after these periods.

Lastly, you are on these or any other Subjects which fall within your Duty to do your utmost to the best of your Judgment for promoting the Service you are sent upon, Studiously Applying yourself to discover the Sentiments and Designs of the Indians, Acquiring their Confidence by Integrity, Mildness, and a Strict Attention to their Affairs and promoting to your utmost that harmony which should subsist between them, and the Soldiery, Traders, or others at the Garrison.

Given under my hand at Johnson-hall the 24th day of March 1767.

[Endorsement] Form of Instructions to the Commissys of Indian Affairs at Michilimackinac, Niagara, and Ontario &c for 1767.

* * * *

Commissary Edward Cole to Sir William Johnson, Detroit, June 23, 1766.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 12, p. 218. A. L. S.]

Dear Sir.

Your kind favor of the 17th of Apl. I received Yesterday with your appointment of me to be commissary of Indien affairs at the Illinois, You may be assured I shall Strictly adhear to your Instructions, and shall leave this in two or three days for Fort Pitt, to go down the Ohio. upon adviseing with my friends, 'Tis thought, the best, Safest, and most Expeditious Rout I could take, and should Mr. Croghan have left Fort Pitt, I shall soon join him at Illinois.

The honour you have done me in appointing me to that important Trust, I shall ever Greatfully acknowledge, I foresee many Difficultys in the discharge of that duty, and only wish, that through a Stedy application for the General good, I may be Capable of Acquitting myself with houour and Credit to the Department.

Three Illinois Indians are here, a principal Chief, a Son of Dequones & another, they would have been with you at the Congress had not Pondiac stab'd the Chief, I hope he will recover, I have applied to the Commedant for provisions for them till he recovers and shall treat them Very Civilly, which may be of Service as they pass through so many Indians on their Return:

I now beg leave to Congratulate you upon the honour confereed on your son in England and doubt not he will continue to merrit Every mark of Esteem shewn him; I

shall procure for you what curiosities I can, my Compliments to your family, I am with much Respect

Sir Your most obt. Servt. Edwd. Cole.

Detroit June 23d. 1766. To Sir William Johnson

[Endorsement] Detroit June 23d. 1766

Comisry. Coles Letter

* * * *

Commissary Edward Cole to Sir William Johnson, Detroit, June 30, 1766

[Sir William Johnson Mss. vol. 12, p. 224. A. L. S.]

Dear Sir

Since I wrote you I have altered my Rout, and go by the Meamies, with a french man and the Illinois Indians I mentioned to you, I am Just now Embarking, and doubt not of soon meeting Mr. Croghan, the St. Joseph Indians have takeing a prisoner at the Illinois, with Which I suppose they purpose to Demand the two prisoners in gard here.

I am Dr. Sir Your most. obt. Servt. Edwd. Cole

Detroit June 30th 1766

[No address or endorsement]

* * * *

Commissary Edward Cole to Sir William Johnson, Miamis, July 15, 1766

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 13, p. 8 (2). A. L. S.]

Dear Sir

I shall Leave this to morrow, Upon my arrival here The Chiefs, Sent for me, to take me by the hand, and well come me to their Village, and made a speach in which they Declared their firm Resolution to adhear Strictly to the peace they had made, then I acquainted them, where I was goeing. and my business, and gave them, a little milk they Seem'd much pleased with the new regulations and now hoped every thing would go wright.

By a Shawanee that past through here Some days past,
I shall be at the Illinois near as Soon as Mr. Croghan,
who is to meet Some Indians at the mouth of the Ouia-
bache which will Detain him Some days.

I hope to write you from the Illinois, and in the interim
with my Compts. to your Family,

I am Dr Sir Your most obt. Servt. Edwd. Cole.

Miamis July 15th 1766

[Endorsement] Miamis July 15th 1766 Comisry Coles
Letter

* * * *

Deed of a house, from Thomas Smallman to Commis-
sary Edward Cole, Chartres, September 8, 1766.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 13, p. 104 (1). Attested
copy.]

Know all Men by these Presents, that I the Subscriber
have this day, Sold, yielded, quitted, ceded, transported
and made Over from henceforth and forever, with war-
rant to free from any trouble or hindrance generally
whatsoever, unto Edwd. Cole Esquire Commissary for
Indian Affairs at the Illinois, and to his successors in the
said Office, on Account and for the use of the Govern-
ment, A House, situated in the Main street, near the
Church in Chartres Village, in the Illinois, late in the
Occupation of Monsr. La Cled, with the Outhouses, Land,
and all the appurtenances thereunto belonging, as they
now stand, for and in consideration of the sum of Six
hundred Dollars. Which I have this Day Received from
him, and do allow that he, & his successors do possess
the same, for the Service aforesaid, and have delivered
to him all original papers relative thereto, And I bind
myself, my Heirs, Executors, Administrators, & Assigns,
unto the said Edwd. Cole Esqr. & his Successors as
aforesaid firmly by these Presents, Sealed with my Seal
this Eighth day of September, in the Sixth Year of the
Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the
Grace of God of Great Britain, France & Ireland King

defender of the faith &c. and in the Year of Christ: 1766.
Signed Sealed and de-
livered in the presence of

Thos. Smallman.

Jno. Reed Col Lt. Cl. 34 Regimt.

Thos. Ford.

a True Copy Jno. Reed Col Lt. Cl. 34 Regimt.

[Endorsement] Deed Thos. Smallman to Edwd Cole
No. 15

* * * *

Edward Cole to George Croghan, Fort Chartres, July
3, 1767.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 15, p. 2. A. L. S.]
Fort Chartres July 3d, 1767.

Dear Sir

You will receive this by the hands of Mr. Messonville, who is a goeing to get his Accot. paid, I have Examd. them, and Cirtified them, as I really think, he could not avoid those expences, I hope you will Interest yourself in his behalf, as I think he deserves Favours, and I believe him to be a very honest man, and as much of an Englishman as is possible for a Frenchman to be, but as you know him better than I, and what directions you gave him I need say no more, only refer you to him to know the dispositions of the Indians on the Ouabach and the nature of our Government.

The Indians About here, seem well disposed as also those from the Messourie, that have been with me. Many more would have been here before this had not the war between these nations, the Sakies and Reynards prevented, but I am told they are now on the way from an Imense distance up the Messourie, I assure you I have but little time to myself, their Numbers are beyond any thing I could conceive, and the Great Lenity always Shewn them by the French, they now expect to continue, and a Variety of Circumstances makeing this Indulgence Necessary, absolutely overcomes me with Fatigue. I

wish I had some one to assist me. Pedigogue who came with me from Detroit, died some Little time past, I assure you he was a good man and behaved well amongst his people, The nation assembled before me in order to have another chief. Young Dequoney being the next heir, he was Unanimously pitched on if agreeable to me, I could have no objections knowing him to be a fine young fellow not Debauched with Liquors, and from the readiness he shows to receive advice and his Good behavior, makes me think he will become one of the Greatest chiefs in this country. Voudra who was with you at Detroit, was here the other day with some Indians from the post, he Says you appointed, Him Interpreter at the post, and that he was to have five Hundred livers a year, and wanted me to pay him, but his not having it from under your hand, and your not mentioning it to me I would not pay him which much displeased him, And also Flamboise who expected to be paid as Last year for his Journey Tho they boath knew I had an Interpreter here. Notwithstanding they Refused the Employ last year Either would gladly accept it now, but I think I am much better Supplied. I hope the Smith will be soon here, or that I shall know wither there is one or no a Comeing, as a very good one now offers. My Comps. to all friends.

I am Dr. Sir Your most. obt. Servt. Edwd. Cole

[Addressed] On his Majesty's Service To
George Croghan Esqr. Dep. Superintendent of Indian Affairs Fort Pitt

[Endorsed] Fort Chartres July 3d. 1767. From Comy
Cole to G. Groghan Esqr.

* * * *

Commissary Cole to Sir William Johnson, Fort Chartres, October 25, 1767.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 16, p. 203. A. L. S.]

Dear Sir

I was not a little Surprised the other day when I received a letter from Messrs. Baynton Wharton & Morgan,

merchts. in Philadelphia, wherein they acquaint me that my March accounts would not be paid for want of proper vouchers and formes, a sample of which they sent me, I could not possibly [see] conceive this to be necessary from the first Instructions I had from you and none others have I received from any one under whome I was put; Except Mr. Croghan who desired me verbally when here to get the Commanding officers to Signe my accounts, which I did, what was Giveing to Indians, I could not perceive any necessity for the others, as they must be known to Every one. another paragraph in your Instructions is "as you will be on the Spot, and it being Impossible to Give more Instructions, you will do what you think best for the Service. had I done otherwise or could it be made appear that I have Should I not Deserve to be abandoned by you my Patron and every other friend I have in this world. these Instructions I have mentioned above are all I received till yours of the 2d. of Apl. last which came to hand the 15th of July by the way of Fort Pitt accompanied with a letter from Mr. Croghan, wherein he says you desire I would get the Commanding ye officer to Cirtifie what Expenses were necessary to be made, this I complied with in a more particular manner then formerly, as you will See by my Septr. accounts inclosed to Mr. Croghan in the manner they are drawn out, and were almost ready to leave this when the disagreeable news arrived of my March accounts not being Accepted. I must now Sir beg your patience while I make a few remarks, which I hope may Justifie my conduct to a Gentleman of your knowledge in the department I am Employed in. I flatter myself you will Give weight to those parts that carry reason with them and ever obliterate from your memory wherein I may have been mistaken or done amiss. I assur you from the Strictest Sinsebility, I mean not to throw any blame on those who may have had a Right to Give me any sort of instruction, reather attribute it to my want of Judgment, not knowing the particular Formes, not

having them before me, which unless I was Inspired, could never devine to be necessary. these Gentn, Further observe that the General remarked that only some were Certified and that is so *Laconick* a manner as to be a Sufficient Reason to refuse them, could he think a Gentleman of so high a rank in the army as Colonel would Sign his Name or Give his Santion to what he thought was not for the good of the Service would it not stare him in the face as much as any Certificate whatever, and does not my takeing a receipt in my name and drawing for the Sum Demonstrate that they were bought for the Kings Service in as Strong a manner as any forme of words I could Invent. how could the General expect to have these formes when neither the colonel or I had any Instructions for it and Indeed if I had they could have no weight with him unless they came from the General.

From the abstracts you sent me of the Lords of Trade's proposels to regalute the Indian Department and which you ordered me to comply as nigh as I possible could Seem to Exclude the army from Interfering with Indian affairs in any manner whatever, Espacially [sic] those at the posts, where Commissaris resided, in this light I construed them and have been ever Tenatious of Supporting the honour of the Department by not suffering it to dwindle into a low fawning, dirty Employ, but from a Spirit I thought justifiable have Endeavored to strain Every nerve in my power to act in such a manner as should turn to the good of the Service. the honour of him whom his majesty has been pleased to put at the head of so consequential a branch as the Extending Trade and Commerce is to the British Nation. And at the same time have never done any thing without acquainting the commanding officer which will be seen by the Certificates he has signed to my accounts, and the same would have been done Long ago had it been known to be necessary. And prevented the Department comeing under any disgrace for the want of it, or the Kings Service Suffering

through my bills being protested, for I do assure you I am afraid I shall be put to much difficulty, for the Future, Should the necessity be ever so Great, to find Credit for what may be really wanted in the Eye of the most Stretest Oeconomist [sic] And how soon some vigorous Efforts may be thought Expedient, I don't pretend to Say, but from the two boats being cut off on the Ohio about a hundred miles above the falls the particulars of which you doubtless have had Long before this in a more fuller manner then I can give it you, Leaves Great reason to think every thing is not wright amongst the Savages and to use the Indian phrase *many bad birds are flying about*, though the Indians here Seem to be as well attached to the English, as any I ever saw.

I am informed by the Chiefs of the Kaskaskies Village, that there is a belt which came from the Irequois, Shawanee & Deleweres passing through the nations Inhabiting the Lakes up to the Fausavoins on the Missisipi, and has taken a turn to go back, to the northward among nations unknown to those here, and that the contents will not be made known till Spring, and the moment it comes to their Knowledge it shall not be kept a Secret from me.

I have Long Since Giveing my opinion unless we Established more posts it would impossible to Lessen the Expences of this part of the world, in the Indian Department, it did not Occur to me at that time the more Effectial meathod the General has now taken not to pay my Accounts, however the arrival of the Spaniards, and the advantageous Situations they have taken possession off may be a means of the General's altering his opinion and perhaps think the present Expences trifles to what may hereafter accrue. I have particular discribed the post they are building, and where I think we ought to have Forts, to Mr. Croghan with my *Certified* Accounts which doubtless he will forward to you. I am not a little Surprised that all the authority, I have for Certifieing my Accounts in the maner you will see them is from the

merchants, Should be Extremely Glad to know if I am to follow such Instructions as come through their hands, without being Signed by you or Mr. Croghan, or any one whome I am to obey. the reason of my doing it now, as they saye these formes have been sent me by you and Mr. Croghan, and think it cruel that they should be kept out of their money because your letters may have miscarried But, if these are not wright you may depend that whenever the proper ones come to hand they Shall be complied with. you must now Give me leave Sir to recapulate what I have mentioned in former letters wherein I have desired Liberty to go down and settle my own prissing affairs. have no answer to them, In my last to Mr. Croghan by Mr. Gibson which doubtless will be transmitted to you, in answer to his from Fort Pitt, with your Instructions, wherein I represented the Impracticability of carrying on the Service, Situated as we are, in this part of the world if I was Strictly to adhear to them, I begd that I might be removed to some other place and if that could not be Granted that I should have liberty to resigne or some one be Sent to relieve me whose conduct would better suit the present Oeconomical Scheme.

Pray Sir now Give yourself a moments reflection, and think of my Situation, at Such a distance from those who are to give me Instructions that it takes a twelve month or nine months at least to have answers. Found falt with, know not for why. obliged to act, not knowing wither wright or wrong. doing what I think best for the Service, haveing the commanding officers approbation tho' he has not Signed every particular account heretofore, as we did not think it necessary. And the manner he signed what he did, Seems Gave umbrage, it was not for me to direct how he should Cirtifie them, but no one could think he would put his name in the manner he did but that he would do the same to those Certificates had they been known.

I hope Sir that you will Excuse this Long letter and make use of Such parts of it as you think the Service may requir. What I fear the Kings Service may Suffer from the Generals refusing my accounts much perplexes me, however I hope soone to be relieved by hearing from you and doubt not you will attribute whatever you fine amiss to want of judgment not Intentionally done.

I am Dear Sir with the utmost respect your most obt. Servt. Edwd. Cole

Fort Chartres Octr. 25th 1767. Sir Wm. Johnson

[Endorsement] Fort Chartres Octr. 25th 1768. Comisry.
Coles letter wth. Accts, recd. 13th
March

[The différence in the date given in the letter and its endorsement will be noticed; the correct date is probably 1767 and the printed calendar therefore in error; compare 15:113 of same date. P. N.]

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Comissary Edward Cole to (George Croghan?), Fort Chartres, October 25, 1767.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 15, p. 113. A. L. S.]

Fort Chartres Octr. 25th 1767

Dear Sir

Inclosed you have my Accounts for the Last Six months amounting to Seven thousand and twenty pounds fifteen Shilling & Eleven pence New York Cury. for which I have drawn on you in Favour of Messrs. Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, Merchants at Phila., and agreeable to your directions at two months Sight. the manner I have drawn the accounts you will see part of the different nations that usally vissits this post, tho' not their Numbers as only a Small part of the Several Tribes have been here

The war amongst themselves has privinted the Whole of the nations comeing down, and the French on the other side takeing that advantage Sent Traders amongst

them and Ingrosed their Peltries, and those that did come came from Messages I sent them Last fall

I have Some Intelligence of affairs being Settled amongst them, if so doubt not but there will be considerable Trade here in the Spring from those nations as well as from those who have not yet been here. I wrote you fully by Mr. Gibson in answer to your Letters by Andrew, to which I refer you. my Sentiments continue the Same,

The Arrival of the Spaniards Some time past, may make a great turn in affairs in this Quarter as I am convinced no pains or Expence will be Stuck at to Ingratiate themselves into the favour of the Savages, they have not taken possession of the French Settlements but leave them to be commanded as before, and have gone to the Missouri there, to Erect two Forts, on the points, where it Emptys into the Mississipi by which means they will command both Rivers. What will the French not be capable of doing. through these advantagious Situations aided and assisted by *Spanish dollars*, they will not only be able to engrose almost the whole Trade, but Gain the Intire affections of the Indians unless timely prevented by our haveing a Strong Post at the mouth of the Illinois River, a Small distence above them. and till that is done I fear the Indian Accounts will be rather higher than Lower tho' I dare Say they are thought much too high already but those think so, I Sincearely wish were in my place, in our present Situation that they might have the tryal.

There has been no boat arrived Since the Smiths who not haveing their Tools obliged me to continue the Same meathod of repairing the arms and utensils of the Indians as before Every thing being ready for them to put up their Tools whenever they arrive have obtained leave for them in the meantime to work in the Fort.

Thus far I wrote Some time ago when my Sept. accounts were ready to Leave this would have done so had not the Express boat from Messrs. Baynton, Wharton &

Morgan arrived wherein I received a Letter from them Gentlemen acquainting me, my merch accounts were refused, for want of proper Formes and Vouchers, which they Sent me And told me the Same had been forwarded by you and Sir William Several times before, it not a little Surprised me that I never received them, and could not helping thinking it Somewhat odd, that these formalities Should be necessary and that I should never have the Least notice of it from anyone but the merchants, but finding these *formalities* could not prejudice the accounts have anexed them and you have also the march accounts Inclosed done in the Same manner, which you will Either forward to Sir William or lay them befor the General as you think proper.

I have wrote fully to Sir William on the matter wherein I have represented how much I think the Service may Suffer by the General refusing these accounts, and have desired to know wither I am to follow Such directions as I receive from the merchants without there being Signed by any one who has a wright to give me orders.

I have Long ago Giveing my opinion that unless more posts were Established, the Expences of the Indian Department could not possibly [sic] be Lessened, it did not occur to me at that time the more Effectial method the General has takeing not to pay my accounts

The two boats being cut off in the Ohio Gives Great Room to think all is not wright amongst the Savages, and I am Informed by the Indians here (who Seem as well disposed to the English as any I ever Saw) that there is a belt now passing among the Indians Inhabiting the Lakes up to the Fausavins liveing on the Mississipi Said to have come from the Iroquois, Shawanese and Delawares and is returning northward, among the nations unknown to those here, and that the contents are not to be known till the Spring, but the moment it comes to their knowledge it shall not be Kept a Secreet from me. Colo. Reed thinks signeing my abstract in the man-

ner he has now done would be sufficient, without Certifying every particular accot.

I am Dr. Sir Your most obt. servt. Edwd. Cole

[Endorsement] Fort Chartres Octbr. 25 & Decbr. 19th
1767

recd. March 13th 1768 Comisry. Coles
Letter

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Commissary Edward Cole to (George Croghan?), Fort
Chartres, December 19, 1767

[Sir William Johnson Mss. vol. 15, p. 183. A. L. S.]

Fort Chartres, Decr. 19th, 1767.

Dear Sir

Yours of the 18th of Octr. I received a few days past. You Doubt not I was Surprised at my accounts being refused, for not being properly Certified, had your letters or Sir Williams Instructions, been as full as this above, they never would have wanted these *formalities* but haveing answered all these points fully in letters to you and Sir William, Shall refer you to them, if ever they get to hand they have been twice up as far as the Cherokee Fort, a man falling Sick the first time, & Indians firing on them the second obliged them to return, tho' I hope they will now goe Safe as the faithfull Silver heels takes them under his charge. I hope you will now find my Accounts, *Sufficiently certified* if they are not please to Send me the necessary formes that they may be wright for the future.

The Smiths you hope behave well and do their duty, how far they would do the Latter if they had Tools I can be no Judge at present, it is but Little they can do without belloweses, none have they nor none can I get, I did obtain liberty for them to work Some time in the Fort, but that was put a Stop too, being but one bellowes, it was wanted for Garrison use, Mr. Phyn brought two pair with him, have applyed to Collo. Reed for one, he says they are so bad they cannot be mended in this Country,

and wither their own will Ever be Sent I cant Say, as they tell me they wer at Fort Pitt when they left it and that if they'd had a Batteux, they could have brought them to the Messissipi, and I could have easily Sent for them.

You wish Some Stop could be put to French traders going out into the Indian Country, So do I with all my hart but unless the Posts are Established I mentioned in my former letters, the mouth of the River Illinois, the cherokee Fort & Post Vinsent it never can be prevented, that being done and all peltrys obliged to be bonded for an English post, and a duty or prohibition Laid on all French goods, landed on this Side would in a great measure through the Trade into our hands, make our Influence much greater with the Indians, and the monys arising from the dutys of the peltry, and French goods, would go far towards paying the Expence of the Country, besides a much Larger consumption for British manufacturies. But These are Considerations for the Great, not, for a trifling Comy. Subject to the orders of every *Rank*.

I dare say You will be able in your Voyage to Detroit to find out the Belts I mentioned pasing among the Indians, and prevent any thing being attempted in the Spring.

I am sorry the House you mentioned was obliged to Stop payment, but as they did it with So much reputation, it can be no prejudice to their Trade or Carrecters, but reather Give them more weight then ever, you may Depend that whatever is in my power to render them Service, I shall not be backward So long as I remain here, and wither ever I shall get away God knows, for notwithstanding the repeated letters I have wrote for liberty to go down and Settle my affairs, or leave to resign, can get no answer to them neither from you or Sir William.

I am Extremely obliged to you for the kind offers you make me of rendering me Service, believe I shall soon be obliged to Accept them, if I cant get liberty to down soon pray Sir Interest yourself for me in this affair and let

me once more Smell Salt water if for so ever so Short a time, I am Dr. Sir

Your most. obt. Servt. Edwd. Cole.

[No address or endorsement]

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Commissary Edward Cole to Sir William Johnson,
Fort Chartres, April 18, 1768

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 16, p. 70. A. L. S.]

Dear Sir

I have this day wrote to Mr. Croghan, incloseing my accounts for the last six months, which he doubtless will forward to you, and to which I refer you, I think there is an absolute necessity of Establishing a Post, at Post Vincennt, and to have Some one there, in the Indian department it being the great path throw which all the northward Indians pass, and a Great place of Trade.

There is now here Mr. Rumsey who was formerly in the 42d Regt. and came with Capt. Sterling when he took possession, he is now a going to Post Vicensnt, I hav desired him to make all the observations he possible can with regard to the Trade being Carried on there, and the behaviour of the Indians, I doubt not he would gladly accept of any Employment for that place. from his Knowledge of the Country and being well Acquainted with the Manners & Customs of Indians, much benifit might arrise from a more Cirtain Intelligence, and puting a Stop to the Illeicet Trade carryed on in the Ouabach and preventing bad people Sowing Sedition among the nations by haveing Such a person there. My compliments to Sir John and your Family and Believe me to be

Dr. Sir with the Utmost Respect Your most. obt.
Humle. Servt. Edwd. Cole

Fort Chartres Apl. 18th 1768

[Endorsement] Fort Chartres 18th April 1768

Comisry. Coles Letter

Extract from a letter to Gen. Thomas Gage, from the Illinois, [July 1768?]

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 16, p. 146. Copy]

Extract of a Letter, to General Gage, from the Illinois.

The immense Expence attending the Indien Department must be a considerable Burthen to the Crown if all the other Nations, on the Continent are so plentifully Supplied as those in this Neighborhood. I have for some time observed that the more Presents they receive, the oftener the Return, and are less contented; and that their chief dependence rests more upon his majesty's Bounty, than their own Industry; for while they are supplied with necessary's, and Provisions, they never move from their Village, but beging and hanging upon the Inhabitants, which gives them such a habit of Idleness (particularly the four Tribes in this District) that they are by the constant use of Spirituous Liquors become Effeminate and Debilitated; so much that nothing can be apprehended, from such a Dastardly Race of Cowards, who impute, the Bounty they receive, proceeds from fear not of Love.

The Commissary I believe Acts for the best, and takes the greatest pains to keep them in our Intrest, which is easily done as the French as present have no occasion for their Service, and gives them Presents but of small value. As it may be necessary to give them presents Annually, those should be purchased as the lowest Prices, and could be bought considerably under the Price, the Government is at present Charged with. Vizt. Lead that is Charges 25 Sols pr. wt could be had for 17, Spirits Issued at fifteen Livers could be procured at eight or nine pr. Gallon, Blankets, Strouds, and all other Articles in proportion, which would considerably reduce the Publick Expense. Please pardon this hint which I would not have offered, but the distance we are here from the world conceals many things from your knowledge, which cannot be divin'd without Information, and think it my duty to

discover Abuses, that I hope to be of some Consequence without falling under the Character of an Informer

[Endorsement] Extract of a Letter from the Illinois to Genl. Gage

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Edward Cole to Sir William Johnson, Fort Chartres February 12, 1769.

[Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 17, p. 66. A. L. S.]

Dear Sir

Yours of 26th of July last came to Hand the 12th of December last. I Immediately dischargd all the Subordinate officers under me, and Hartily Wish these alterations may *Turn out for the best* I am in Hopes that I shall be able to Leave this Country, in two or three months at Farthest. I shall Loose no time to wait on you. and Flatter myself I shall be able to give you a more Satisfactory account, of the Indians in this part of the world, then has been in my power to do heretofore.

And Doubt not if any thing Should happing—wherein I might be of Service, you will be as Mindful of me as formerly, and be assured I Shall ever Retain a Grateful Sence of the many Favours I have Received from You. My best Compliment to Sir John. and your Family and believe me to be Dr. Sir with the utmost Esteem

Yours Most obt. Huml. Servt. Edwd. Cole

Fort Chartres Feby. 12th 1769

[Endorsement] Fort Chartres, Feby. 12th 1769 Comsry. Coles letter.

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Commissary Edward Cole to Sir William Johnson, New Orleans, June 13, 1769.

Sir William Johnson Mss, vol. 17, p. 189. A. L. S.

Dear Sir

I am thus Far on my way to you. I left Fort Chartres the 25th of Apl. and arrived here in 13 days, there is Vessels daily Expected here, from New York, and Philadelphia. Shall Embrace the first Oppportunity.

You will Doubtless before you receive this, have heard of Pondiac's being killed by the Pariorias who live at Cahákia. what Effect it will have amongst the Indians, I cant say, no very good one I believe as they already Seem discontented enough a few Nights before I left the Illinois, there was a Soldier and his wife Scalped, a little way from the Fort in their Bed. Supposed to be Ouabach Indians, and Since my Departure Six Kaskaskias Indians was Scalped between the Fort and their Vilage by the Sacks & Reynards. Shall be better able to informe you, when I have the pleasure of Seeing You.

My Compliments to your Family I am Sir with the Utmost Respect Your Most obt. Huml. Servt. Edward Cole

New Orleans June 13th 1769. Sir William Johnson
 [Endorsement] New Orleans June 13th 1769 Comisry.
 Coles Letter